

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PORT M 01391 240835Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
/066 W
-----093556 240838Z /10

P R 240600Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3613
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
CINCPAC HONOLULU

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PP
SUBJECT: SOMARE STAY IN BUT LEADERSHIP CODE OUT

REF: PORT MORESBY 1352

1. SUMMARY: WITH DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER JULIUS CHAN'S PPP PROVIDING THE KEY VOTES ON BOTH OCCASIONS, PARLIAMENT FORCED PM SOMARE TO WITHDRAW LEADERSHIP CODE BUT GAVE HIM A VICTORY IN DEFEATING VOTE OF NO-CONFIDENCE AUGUST 24. RESULTS, WHILE NOT SURPRISING, HIGHLIGHT CHAN'S IMPORTANCE ONCE AGAIN. SOMARE REMAINS AS NATION'S LEADER IN EYES OF PEOPLE BUT HE CAN NOT COUNT ON PARLIAMENT DOING HIS BIDDING. END SUMMARY.

2. PARLIAMENT DEFEATED MOTION OF NO-CONFIDENCE AUGUST 24. ALTHOUGH COUNT NOT YET AVAILABLE, SOMARE'S PANGU/PPP COALITION WON BY SOME NINE VOTES. DEPUTY LEADER OF OPPOSITION UNITED PARTY TOLD EMBOFF RIGHT AFTER VOTE THAT SOME OF HIS PEOPLE HAD VOTED WITH GOVERNMENT. WHILE
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SOMEWHAT DISAPPOINTED, HE SAID WITH A BIG SMILE, "AT LEAST THE GOVERNMENT KNOWS THERE'S AN OPPOSITION NOW AND THAT WE'RE READY TO GOVERN."

3. FOLLOWING HIS DEFEAT ON AUGUST 21 ON PROCEDURAL VOTE WHICH WOULD HAVE ENABLED PARLIAMENT TO CONSIDER CONSTITUTIONAL LAWS CONSTITUTING THE PROPOSED LEADERSHIP

CODE, SOMARE WITHDREW THE LEADERSHIP CODE A DAY LATER. IN DOING SO, SOMARE SAID, "I HAVE BEEN BEATEN FOR THE MOMENT ON TECHNICAL AND LEGAL COMPLICATIONS ON THE LEADERSHIP CODE BUT THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT HISTORY WILL PROVE MY STAND IS THE RIGHT ONE. I MAY BE AHEAD OF TIME, MORE THAN MOST MEMBERS, BUT THE TIME IS COMING VERY SOON. THE LEADERSHIP CODE HAS SUFFERED A SETBACK BUT IT IS NOT FINISHED WITH."

4. AS EXPECTED, DPM JULIUS CHAN'S PEOPLE'S PROGRESS PARTY (PPP) OPPOSED THE PRIME MINISTER ON THE LEADERSHIP CODE AND SUPPORTED HIM ON THE VOTE OF NO-CONFIDENCE. NOT ONE PPP MEMBER, INCLUDING CHAN, VOTED WITH PANGU ON THE CODE. SOMARE WAS ABLE TO MUSTER ONLY 47 VOTES. PRESS ON MORNING AUGUST 24 SAID PPP CAUCUS PREVIOUS EVENING HAD VOTED 10-8 TO SUPPORT SOMARE ON NO-CONFIDENCE MOTION AND THAT CHAN HIMSELF HAD ABSTAINED.

5. TWO VIVID IMPRESSIONS EMERGE FROM RAUCOUS PARLIAMENTARY SESSION. FIRST, JULIUS CHAN IS IN KEY POSITION. HAD HE SWUNG HIS VOTES TO THE OPPOSITE SIDE HE COULD HAVE APPROVED LEADERSHIP CODE AND DEPOSED SOMARE. HIS VOICE WILL CONTINUE TO LOOM LARGE IN GPNG. SECOND, WHILE SOMARE, PNG'S LEADER FOR INDEPENDENCE, IS STILL "NAMBAWAN MAN" AND NATION'S CHARISMATIC LEADER, HE CAN NOT COUNT ON PARLIAMENT DOING HIS BIDDING.
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THE UP LEADER SAID (PARA 2 ABOVE) THE GOVERNMENT NOW KNOWS IT FACES AN OPPOSITION--PROBABLY A HEALTHY THING IN THIS EMERGING DEMOCRACY.

6. PARLIAMENT EXPECTED TO ADJOURN LATER TODAY (AUG 24) OR TOMORROW. SEPTTEL WILL FOLLOW WITH REVIEW OF SESSION.
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